

**Communicable Disease Epidemiology  
and Immunization Section**

401 Fifth Avenue, Suite 900  
Seattle, WA 98104-1818

**206-296-4774** Fax 206-296-4803  
TTY Relay: 711

**Health Advisory:  
Influenza Reporting and Testing Recommendations for the 2009-2010 Flu Season  
September 16, 2009**

**Action requested:**

- **Report the following to Public Health within one business day by faxing a completed case report form to 206-296-4803 (report hospitalized patients through the hospital infection control program):**
  - **All hospitalized patients with lab-confirmed influenza infection of any type\***
  - **Deceased patients with lab-confirmed influenza infection\***
  - **Deceased and critically ill patients (i.e. admitted to ICU) suspected to have influenza, even if infection is not lab-confirmed**
  - **Institutional outbreaks of influenza-like illness (e.g. at long term care facilities and health care facilities)**
- **Send specimens or isolates with a completed PHL virology submission form from the following patients to the Washington State Public Health Laboratories (PHL) for 2009 H1N1 testing if not already performed:**
  - **Hospitalized patients with lab-confirmed influenza infection**
  - **Deceased patients with lab-confirmed influenza infection**
  - **With approval from Public Health:**
    - **Deceased or critically ill patients with suspected influenza**
    - **Patients involved in institutional outbreaks of influenza-like illness**
  - **The PHL will accept specimens from non-hospitalized pregnant women positive for influenza for 2009 H1N1 testing, but testing and reporting are not required**
  - **For patients who do not meet criteria for testing at PHL, 2009 H1N1 testing can be performed at a commercial laboratory - results do not need to be reported to Public Health unless the patient is hospitalized**

**Background**

It is anticipated that sudden, widespread outbreaks of novel influenza A H1N1 could occur in our community early this fall, possibly co-circulating with seasonal influenza. Case reporting will focus on hospitalized patients to monitor illness severity and trends. H1N1 is expected to be the predominant strain of influenza circulating this season and many cases will not need or have influenza subtyping performed. Accordingly the Washington State Department of Health will soon require hospitals and healthcare workers to report all patients who are hospitalized or have died with laboratory-confirmed influenza of any subtype, not just novel H1N1. This is a change from the previous emergency rule which required reporting of all hospitalized and deceased patients with confirmed or suspected 2009 H1N1 influenza infection only. Healthcare workers should work with their hospital infection control practitioners to determine the most efficient method of testing and reporting patients who meet the above criteria to Public Health. Please fax completed WA DOH report forms to Public Health at (206) 296-4803 within 1 business day of diagnosis. Hospitals that wish to report via electronic spreadsheet should have their infection control practitioner contact Public Health for a spreadsheet template and submission instructions. Public Health is available for consultation by calling (206) 296-4774.

**Resources**

- **Public Health Seattle & King County Novel Influenza A H1N1 Information for Healthcare Providers**  
<http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/preparedness/pandemicflu/swineflu/providers.aspx>
- **WA DOH Influenza Report Form -** <http://www.doh.wa.gov/notify/forms/influenza.pdf>
- **WA DOH PHL 2009 H1N1 Virology Submission form -**  
<http://www.doh.wa.gov/ehsphi/Epidemiology/CD/swineflu/VirH1N1form.pdf>
- **CDC Clinical and Public Health Guidance Documents -** <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance/>

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\* Laboratory confirmation may be by a positive rapid influenza test, real-time PCR test, direct fluorescent antibody assay, immunofluorescent assay, or viral isolate from cell culture